lated areas of the country with a population density, as per 1981 census, of about 600 per sq km The transmitter will benefit about 32 97 lakh predominantly rural, backward area population

Shortage of Raw Material for Mini Steel Plants

1984 SHRI ANBARASU ERA Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state

(a) whether there is a ban for the import of iron scrap;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the mini steel plants are facing acute shortage of raw materials due to this ban,

(c) if so, the steps taken to avoid the closure of mini steel plants, and

(d) if no steps are being taken, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV) (a) No, Sir

(b) The reduced availability of free foreign exchange with the Metal Scrap Trade Corporation (MSTC) and the high cost of steel melting scrap imported directly by the users did lead to a fall in scrap imports which has affected the production in the mini steel plants

(c) Government have reduced the customs duty on carbon steel melting scrap from 35% to 10% which will make it easier for the mini steel plants to import scrap. A major thrust is also being given to increasing production of sponge iron in the country to improve the domestic availability of raw materials for the min steel plants

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Power Deterioration in Assam Due to Non-Availability of Spare Parts

1985 SHRI PROBIN DEKA Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state

(a) whether the power position in Assam is deteriorating following non-availability of spare parts, and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to improve the power position there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) (a) and (b) According to the Assam State Electricity Board power supply position in Assam was not satisfactory from 14 2 1992 to 29 2 1992 partly due to non-availability of spare parts and outage of Bongaigaon Thermal Power Station units due to tube leakage The situation has since improved with the re-commissioning of the shut down unit

[*Translation*]

Expansion of Telephone Exchanges in Uttar Pradesh

1986 DR LAL BAHADUR RAWAL Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state

(a) whether there is any scheme for the expansion of [illegible] exchanges in various districts of Uttar Pradesh Particularly Aligarh, and

(b) if so, the names of the telephone exchanges proposed to be modernise and expanded in the State?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE